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THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE

THE PALIMPSEST, issued monthly by the State Historical Society of Iowa, is devoted to the dissemination of Iowa History. Supplementing the other publications of this Society, it aims to present the materials of Iowa History in a form that is attractive and a style that is popular in the best sense—to the end that the story of our Commonwealth may be more widely read and cherished.

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH
Superintendent

THE MEANING OF PALIMPSESTS

In early times palimpsests were parchments or other materials from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the records of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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FROM A LITHOGRAPH COPY OF A PAINTING BY C. B. KING

POWESHIEK

THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY JOHN ELY BRIGGS

VOL. VIII ISSUED IN SEPTEMBER 1927 NO. 9

Poweshiek

Large and clear among the flickering shadows of those other days when the Iowa country was the home of the red man, looms the figure of Poweshiek. A chief of the Foxes at the period of the Black Hawk War in 1832, he afterward became head chief of that tribe, superior in rank to Wapello but subordinate to Keokuk who was the recognized leader of both the Sacs and the Foxes. Although well known, Poweshiek was often overshadowed by the superior position and showmanship of the colorful Keokuk, while Wapello, also a man of address and a friend of Keokuk, not infrequently occupied a more prominent place than Poweshiek in the public life of the combined Sac and Fox nation.

Not distinguished by brilliant talents as were some of his brothers, he was nevertheless highly respected and held rank among the first men of his tribe around the council fires, and when treaties

were negotiated his name was appended in a prominent fashion. Thus, in making the treaty of 1832 at Fort Armstrong, by which the Sacs and Foxes surrendered six million acres of eastern Iowa — the famous Black Hawk Purchase — Poweshiek had an important rôle. The treaty was signed by Keokuk and eight other leading Sacs, and by twenty-four Foxes of whom Poweshiek was third. Again in 1842, the treaty negotiated at Agency City which opened central Iowa to white settlement bears the signature of Governor Chambers, and the marks of Keokuk and twenty-one Sac leaders, and Poweshiek together with twenty-one head men of the Foxes.

In the council at Agency City, the government proposed to buy all the land of the Sacs and Foxes in Iowa. Keokuk, speaking for the tribes, agreed to sell all the land except one square mile, which they had promised to Mrs. Street and her children. Governor Chambers insisted on all the land. Thereupon the children of General Street withdrew their claim and Keokuk was ready to yield to the wish of the Governor, but Poweshiek remained adamant. As a result Keokuk stiffened and the Indians retained the square mile of land where their beloved white brother, Joseph M. Street, lay buried close by the grave of their own chief Wapello.

Here was Poweshiek, standing against Keokuk and the insistent demand of the Governor and having his will. It was characteristic of the man. Born at one of the Fox villages on Iowa soil about the

year 1797, Poweshiek's entire life was woven into the drama enacted on the Iowa prairies during the period when this section of the trans-Mississippi West was preëmpted by the whites. His biography is the story of friendly contacts with traders and government agents, treaty negotiations for the cession of tribal hunting grounds, and frequent removals of his village westward before the press of insatiable settlers. To-day a county that was once a part of his domain bears the name of Poweshiek.

His name has been interpreted to mean "Roused Bear", which seems to be in harmony with his character. This version may have some significance also from the fact that he was a member of the bear clan which was the ruling clan of the Foxes. At a treaty council in Washington he was called the "Shedding Bear". Other commentators have asserted that his name means "to dash the water off". But the most authoritative translation is to the effect that Poweshiek should more properly be spelled "Pawishik", a masculine proper name of the bear clan signifying "he who shakes [something] off [himself]."

In all accounts, Poweshiek figures in the guise of a man — a hulking, mountainous man; a giant, tall and cumbersome, weighing two hundred and fifty pounds in the prime of his manhood. Described by a missionary in 1834 as savage and debased in appearance, his portrait painted in Washington in 1837 does not depict him so. There he is shown as

a warrior — stalwart, fine visaged, clear of eye, alert, a man of will and determination. When all is told, he stands as a "rather noble specimen of the American savage."

Although not particularly belligerent, Poweshiek was preëminently a man of war. "We do not want to learn," he declared to an Indian agent, "we want to kill Sioux. The Great Spirit made us to fight and kill one another when we are a mind to." According to one of his white contemporaries "he was characterized by a disposition full of exactness and arrogance", which did not endear him to his associates. Less reticent than other chiefs, he was extremely blunt and outspoken. To an early settler who knew him well he appeared "fat, heavy, lazy and a drunkard, whenever he could get whisky, and that was frequently". Though laboring under those handicaps he was nevertheless generally recognized to be "honest, brave, and just". Slow to arouse, he was full of energy and hard to control when once stirred to action.

All sources contribute to the impression that he was a man with a strange passion for justice. "His word was regarded as sacred", and a gift was remembered with gratitude. The principal qualities of his mind were truthfulness and fair dealing.

A well-known anecdote illustrates his sense of honesty and the power he wielded over his people. One summer a horse, strayed or stolen from a remote settlement, was traced to the neighborhood of

Poweshiek's village. The owner suspected that the horse was in the possession of one of the Indians and reported his suspicions to Poweshiek. The chief knew nothing of the matter, but promised to investigate immediately.

Issuing an order that no one was to leave the village until further orders, Poweshiek sent the owner of the horse through the village with an escort in search of his property. Having found the animal and identified it to the satisfaction of Poweshiek, the Indian in whose possession it was found being unable to give a satisfactory explanation, the horse was straightway returned to the owner. Moreover, the Indian was made to pay liberally from his annuity for the trouble and expense he had caused. Besides this he was punished rather vigorously by Poweshiek himself for his dishonesty. "Had the encampment or village been walled in, or sentinels posted, it would not have been more secure in retaining every denizen at home until the search was over, than was the imperious word of Poweshiek to his people."

It is said by some authorities that Poweshiek rather than Keokuk was primarily responsible for weakening Black Hawk's fighting power when that powerful chieftain went on the warpath in 1832, in a last futile effort against the inpour of whites. For some time previous, the alliance between the Sacs and Foxes had been growing weak. After a few subordinate Sac chiefs ceded away the Rock River

country in Illinois without the knowledge or consent of the people, Poweshiek with most of the Foxes withdrew from the others and crossed the Mississippi. Thereafter, for a few years, his village was in the neighborhood of the present city of Davenport. When the fighting began east of the Mississippi, Poweshiek was joined by Keokuk and his fleeing band of Sacs. Later the defeated tribesmen came limping in from their defeats and Poweshiek gave them protection.

If the history of the Sacs and Foxes were followed through its full course to the bitter end, it would furnish "a study in the different stages of progress and decay of a once powerful nation." What is true of the nation is true of its members. The downward trend of Keokuk, Poweshiek, and others is a reflection of the decline of the tribe. Dissipation, disease, and despair were their lot. Standing in the pathway of an irresistible force they inevitably went down before it, some in one way, some in another.

According to traders' accounts and statements of early settlers, Poweshiek, like Keokuk and Wapello, was very fond of whisky, too fond of it, and in times of unexpected good fortune or in days of gloom and misfortune he was accustomed to become deeply intoxicated. This, with the constant pressure of white settlement and the necessity of moving again and again to a new locality farther west, made a deep impression upon him. His life was not happy.

In 1837, Poweshiek, in company with thirty-five other prominent Sacs and Foxes, including eight women and children belonging to some of the chiefs, escorted by Indian Agent Street, visited Washington and other cities in the East. The trip was to make peace with the Sioux and to demonstrate to the Indians the love borne for them by their white brothers. But before another year had passed the old, old story of white aggression was repeated.

Iowa became a Territory on July 4, 1838. In honor of that occasion the settlers in Johnson County met at John Gilbert's trading place to celebrate the day. Poweshiek, whose village was a few miles up the river at that time, was called upon to address the gathering. After an interpreter explained to him the reason for the celebration that day, the chief rose to his full height, slipped his blanket from his shoulder, raised his hand aloft, and, pointing westward, spoke of the white men's victory over their red brothers which by the irony of fate he was helping to commemorate. With all the dramatic instinct and simple eloquence of Indian oratory he accepted the inevitable. His words were charged with the pathos of the Indians' plight.

"Soon", he said, "I shall go to a new home and you will plant corn where my dead sleep. Our towns, the paths we have made, and the flowers we love will soon be yours. I have moved many times and have seen the white man put his feet in the tracks of the Indian and make the earth into fields and gardens.

I know that I must go away and you will be so glad when I am gone that you will soon forget that the meat and the lodge-fire of the Indian have been forever free to the stranger and at all times he has asked for what he has fought for, the right to be free.''

It was ever thus. From the Rock River to the west bank of the Mississippi, then to the Cedar River, thence westward into Johnson County on the Iowa, then on to Poweshiek County, next to Jasper County along the Skunk, across the Des Moines, and finally, tarrying tentatively on the banks of the Grand River in southwestern Iowa, Poweshiek and his village of Foxes moved reluctantly from stream to stream across the prairies of Iowa. Continually the Indians retreated before the host of white invaders.

In accordance with the treaty of 1842, Poweshiek withdrew from central Iowa and began the long migration to Kansas. During the winter of 1845 and 1846 his village, which consisted of forty lodges, was located on Grand River near the settlements of northern Missouri. But he was reluctant to leave Iowa. As he brooded over the fate of his people he determined to resist any further attempt to drive him from his native land. He did not want to go to the plains across the Missouri.

Rumors spread that the Indians were going on the war-path. When the report of the threatened trouble came to Fort Des Moines, Dr. James Camp-

bell, J. B. Scott, and Hamilton Thrift, who were intimately acquainted with Poweshiek, mounted horses and rode with great speed to the Indian encampment in the hope of averting bloodshed. Calling attention to their long ride through the snow as evidence of their friendship, they urged Poweshiek to give up his war-like intentions. "If you persist in your purpose of making war on the whites, many of your squaws and papooses, as well as your braves will be butchered, and the remainder will be driven out into the cold and the snow to perish on the prairies", they argued. "It would be better now for you to break up your lodges and go in peace to your reservation in Kansas, which the government has provided for you."

Poweshiek was not inclined to accept this advice, fearing that it would be construed as an exhibition of cowardice. But at last he realized that the odds against him were too great, and that in a fight between himself and the government he would surely be defeated. He was confident his braves could whip the dragoons at Fort Des Moines and maybe drive the settlers away, but he knew that sooner or later the "Great Father" at Washington would come and conquer the Indians.

Eventually this remnant of the Foxes was conducted to their reservation by United States troops. Somewhere in Kansas, Poweshiek lies buried in an unknown grave.

F. R. Aumann

Implacable Foes

The Sacs and Foxes, like the Sioux, were a brave and warlike people. From their earliest appearance in history until they were placed on a reservation, the story of these allied tribes is a record of savage strife. They invariably resisted the advance of French traders and missionaries. In the War of 1812 a band of them fought with the British against the Americans and twenty years later the same rash chieftain defied the power of the United States in a hopeless contest to maintain the rights of his people. During the early part of the eighteenth century the Sacs and Foxes were active in destroying the great Illinois confederacy. Later, when they crossed the Mississippi, they made war upon their new neighbors. Brooking no interference, they swept aside the Ioways in one heroic battle, so tradition has it. But the Sioux were as numerous as the buffaloes on the prairie and as courageous as the Sacs and Foxes themselves. Almost incessant warfare existed between them.

Below the mouth of Catfish Creek south of Dubuque is an isolated bluff nearly two hundred feet high. It is separated from the neighboring hills by a wide valley and the side next to the river is nearly perpendicular. According to Indian tradition this towering hill was the scene of a great battle between

the Sacs and Foxes and the Sioux in the days before white settlement.

The Sioux, outnumbered and defeated, had fled to this place of safety and fortified their position on the summit. A rude parapet had been built of logs and brush, behind which the harried tribesmen had taken refuge with their women and children.

But the Sacs and Foxes were not to be thwarted in their bloodthirsty designs. Having learned the position of their intended victims, they cautiously awaited nightfall before beginning the attack. Under the cover of darkness, when the Sioux could not watch their movements, they began to ascend the hill. Unobserved, they reached the barricade, swiftly dispatched the sentinels, and with a savage war-whoop they were over the wall into the camp before the Sioux were aware of their approach. Desperate hand to hand fighting ensued for a short time and then, having set fire to the brush fortifications, the Sacs and Foxes retired. While they were protected by darkness, the Sioux were exposed by the light of the burning camp.

At last the Sioux, thinned in numbers, began to yield ground. Quick to observe their advantage, the Sacs and Foxes seized their war clubs and tomahawks and rushed upon their foes. The combat that ensued on the summit of the bluff was short and terrible. The Sioux, completely overpowered and cut off from every avenue of escape, were driven to the brink of the precipice where they were beaten

to death or hurled headlong to the rocks below. Not one escaped.

On other occasions the Sioux were victorious. And so the warfare continued. Sometimes trouble arose over stolen horses, sometimes lone braves were stealthily murdered, but more frequently the fighting occurred between hunting parties whose trails happened to cross. It was war without quarter whenever these traditional enemies met. And their feud accounts were never balanced.

In 1825 the government undertook to establish peace in the Iowa country. A great council was held at Prairie du Chien to which the Sioux and their enemies, the Chippewas, the Sacs and Foxes, and the Ioways, were invited. General William Clark explained that hostilities were caused mainly from the lack of definite boundaries for the hunting grounds of the various tribes. To this the Indians assented, but when they were asked to agree upon the location of the proposed boundaries there was no agreement. For days the Sioux argued with the Sacs and Foxes as to the limits of their respective domains. At last, however, a dividing line was determined, a treaty was signed, and the calumet was smoked as a solemn pledge that the tomahawk was buried forever.

Scarcely two years elapsed before the Sacs and Foxes put on their war paint and resumed more normal relations with their hated neighbors to the north. The trouble grew out of a misunderstanding

over the possession of a horse. A Sioux, who had lived among the Foxes for a number of years and had married a Fox woman, a sister of a chief, desired to return to his own country. Leaving his wife, he departed, taking with him, however, a horse that belonged to her. Some time afterward the Fox chief sent word to the Sioux chief that he hoped his sister's horse would be returned immediately, but if he should be disappointed in that expectation, he would be obliged to enter the Sioux country in search of the horse and if that should be necessary he might take something more than stolen property.

To this ultimatum the Sioux chief replied that he knew nothing about the horse. The Foxes were welcome to come and get their horse if what they claimed was true. As to taking anything besides the horse, however, he would attend to that matter when it became necessary. There negotiations ended. The Foxes soon invaded the Sioux country, killed some of their enemies, and hostilities were resumed.

For three years intermittent raids and murder continued. In the spring of 1830, after a party of Sac and Fox Indians had killed some Sioux rivals near the Cedar River in Iowa, Joseph M. Street decided to arrange a conference at Prairie du Chien to settle the perennial difficulties in a friendly council. Unfortunately, on the day the Sacs and Foxes were due to arrive, a Sioux war party went down the river about fifteen miles and there lay in ambush for their enemies. After sunset the

unsuspecting Sacs and Foxes arrived and prepared to camp for the night. While they were carrying their goods ashore, leaving their guns and war clubs still in the canoes, the hidden warriors bounded to their feet "with a horrible yell, and fired a murderous volley at the surprised party." Only one brave and a boy escaped to carry the news of the massacre to their people, who immediately abandoned their village near Dubuque and fled to Rock Island. The victims of the ambuscade were horribly mutilated, and the victorious Sioux paraded the streets of Prairie du Chien, dancing the scalp-dance and proudly displaying the scalps of their foes.

Agent Street's friendly conference never materialized, but the incident convinced the authorities at Washington that another general council should be held at once. As a result a new treaty was concluded at Prairie du Chien on July 15, 1830, establishing a neutral zone forty miles wide between the Sioux and the Sacs and Foxes. Surely this neutral ground, it was thought, would be wide enough to prevent trespassing.

But the hope of permanent peace between the tribes was short lived. In 1831 the Sacs and Foxes, still revengeful for the massacre of the previous year, sent a war party up the Mississippi against the Sioux. From the bluffs opposite Prairie du Chien their spies discovered the camp of the enemy almost under the guns of Fort Crawford. Lying in ambush

until night, the Sac and Fox warriors stripped themselves of every encumbrance except the girdle holding the tomahawk and scalping knife and swam across the river. Stealthily they crawled down upon the Sioux encampment. While their enemies lay sleeping they quietly killed seventeen chiefs and braves, besides some women and children. Before the Sioux realized what was happening the murderers had escaped. Crossing the river, they leaped into their waiting canoes, and speedily returned to their village on Catfish Creek.

One of the last encounters between the ancient enemies occurred in the summer of 1837. In a "talk" sent by two braves to Agent Street at Rock Island and printed in the Galena *Gazette and Advertiser* on August 19, 1837, Waucoshaushe, the Fox war chief, who was severely wounded in the fight, vividly described the circumstances that led to the engagement.

"My father: I send two of my young men to tell you the news. When I returned from St. Louis, I found our people starving at the village — I divided all the provisions I had received from our trader among them, and the powder and lead to enable us to make a hunt to supply our families until our corn was ripe, or that our great father had paid our money to enable our traders to furnish us. I divided the upper band of Foxes (of whom I am now speaking) into two parties: one to advance along the dividing country, between the Iowa and Red

Cedar rivers; the other party to proceed up the right bank of Cedar River. Of the latter I took charge, consisting of about forty men, and about one hundred and thirty women and children.

"As we advanced, we found the game very scarce, and had to depend on fish, which were caught from the Cedar, to keep our people from dying of hunger; but I was in hopes that when we reached a strip of wooded country between the Wapsipinecon and Cedar, we should find plenty of game. I sent off a party of hunters in advance to provide a supply for us when the women and children arrived; but the party of hunters soon returned, and reported that some Winnebagoes were hunting on the ground. This was bad news in our starving condition, and we could not return, for we had nothing to return to; and the nearest point that we could find game was about the mouth of Otter River.

"I proceeded with my starving party to that point, and encamped about mid-day, and sent out a party of hunters to hunt. They soon returned and reported that they had fallen upon a large Sioux trail, and no doubt the Sioux had taken possession of our hunting grounds.

"What was now to be done? My number of fighting men was small, but to retreat was impossible, for we must have been discovered by the Sioux and followed, and whenever you turn your back on an enemy you are sure to be defeated. My braves agreed with me that we should immediately start on

the trail that had been discovered, leave our women and children at the camp, ascertain where the Sioux were encamped, and, if not too strong a party, to drive them out of our hunting grounds.

"We started, and soon fell in with the trail, and followed it across Otter River, and then took a direction into the prairie toward where the sun sets. About midnight we discovered something that resembled Sioux lodges. We rushed up to them, making our war cry, but when we came up to them it was nothing but sandhills instead of lodges. The Sioux were encamped in the hollow, and were now on their guard, having discovered us by our bad management. At this time we could have retreated, but reflecting on our situation, that our families were starving and our hunting grounds taken possession of by the Sioux, and the remembrance of our friends and relations that they had killed last winter, determined us to follow them as far as the line.

"We had not proceeded far when the Sioux fired on us. I, with my party, rushed into their camp, and after fighting desperately for some time, we found the Sioux were in too large a force. All that could retreated out of the camp, and took a position back of a small rise, within gunshot of their camp, and kept up the firing as long as our ammunition lasted. We then retreated to our camp where we had left our women and children, bringing thirteen wounded with us, and leaving eleven killed on the field.

"My father, I am one of the wounded, and expect never to see you again. I have followed your advice, and have done the best I could for my nation, and I do not fear to die.

"We have, with the greatest difficulty, reached our village and brought in our wounded, and fear that many of our people will die of hunger.

"My father, I have no more to say.

Waucoshaushe
Principal war chief of the Foxes"

This battle, as the culmination of many similar conflicts, figured largely in the general council at Washington in October of that year. While delegations from the warring tribes were there ostensibly to make new land session treaties, the Secretary of War took advantage of the occasion to exhort the Indians to make peace and avoid future conflicts. It was a dramatic and colorful assemblage, but as a peace conference it was a dismal failure.

JOHN ELY BRIGGS

Talk of Peace

We have the satisfaction to present before our readers transcripts of the speeches delivered at the council held by the Secretary of War on October 5, 1837, with the Sioux, Sacs and Foxes, and Ioways. The assembling of the council was prompted by a desire to impress upon them, when thus brought together, face to face, the importance and advantages of their living at peace with each other. For many years they have committed predatory incursions upon the land of each other, in which blood has been shed. The evidences of unfriendly feelings still cherished by them, were so apparent, as to indicate the inexpedience of inducing them to sign formal articles of amity and peace. The Secretary of War, therefore, confined himself to an earnest exhortation to them to cultivate a friendly feeling towards each other.

The speeches have been written out from full notes, and have been revised by the interpreters and agents. They contain a correct account of the substance of each talk, but without the spirit and imagery in which every speaker indulged. The length of the sentences, the imperfect acquisition of the

[This verbatim account of the Indian peace council at Washington in 1837 is here reprinted from *Niles' National Register*, Vol. 53, pp. 150, 151. It appeared originally in the Washington *Globe*.—THE EDITOR]

English language by the interpreters, and the consequent want of confidence in some of them, are the reasons that probably prevent the complete translation of the Indians' speeches.

The calumet of peace was passed by the Secretary of War, J. R. Poinsett, — specially authorized commissioner on the part of the United States — to the different delegations, after which the commissioner addressed them as follows:

My Red Brethren, Chiefs and Warriors: as some of you (the Sioux) are about to leave us, I have assembled you in council, before your departure, that I might exhort you to remain at peace when you return to your own homes. Your great father has heard with pain that you have struck each other in your lodges and hunting grounds, and have shed each other's blood. He regards all his red children with equal affection, and is always displeased when one of you seeks to injure or outrage the other. He bids me tell you, that whichever of you shall hereafter strike at the other, will not only incur his displeasure, but will offend the Great Spirit that loves peace.

If you desire to learn the arts by which the white men have acquired wealth, and enjoy prosperity, you must abstain from war. If you desire to learn to cultivate the earth, and to raise abundance of corn, so that you may have plenty to eat, when the game shall fly beyond the mountains, you must not seek each other's blood.

This great country you have so lately passed through, has reached the power and prosperity you have witnessed by the tribes within it maintaining peace with each other. If the white men on your borders, the tribes that inhabit Arkansas and Missouri, were to strike each other as you do, and destroy each other's villages, both those states would become a wilderness. If the white men around you, instead of being at peace, were to attack each other as you do, the road you have travelled, now lined with populous towns and flourishing villages, and fertile fields would be desolate, and the country filled with the beasts of the forest.

Let me exhort you then to maintain peace with each other when you return to your homes, and if any cause of quarrel arises, instead of killing each other, to refer the dispute to the agents your great father has sent to watch over you, and to hear and abide their word.

Eeehahkaakow, or "He that comes last", a Sioux chief replied.

My Father: I have something to say, and I wish you to believe that what I shall say is the truth.

We have made peace, and have a good understanding with all the tribes here present; but a part of these are always the first to undo what is done.

When we address our great father, we like to speak the truth; we wish to be at peace, but these people are the first to commence war. If you will

stop them, my father, all will be well. We live at a great distance from you on the plains. There they create the difficulties of which you hear; they killed twenty-seven of my people; but we did not go to war immediately, but listened to the words of our great father, and have kept peace so long. We have always listened to the counsel of our great father, and have had no part in the fighting; it has all been done by a small party of our people; had we commenced in earnest, affairs might have changed long ago.

I am pleased with the talk you have made to us: our people will remember it; but we would not like to be troubled too much when we get home.

My father, we have but one word when we make a promise — we go by it.

The people, who live near me, have been struck four times (here he placed four sticks on the table) without our striking back: it has made me ashamed.

Marcpuahnasiah, or the "Standing Cloud", spoke next.

My Father: Looking round at your children, you think all their ears are open to what you say; but I think part of them are deaf; they act like men that have no ears at all. I have heart and ears, and take into them all I hear from you. These people have struck us often, but we have sat with our arms folded: still they strike, and we remain quiet.

What I say I do not say with a forked tongue; we are willing to hold back, as you have counselled us; our agent has given us the same counsel, and

has partly held my hands. We have been struck many times, without revenging ourselves; but we have not refrained from fear. We are numerous enough, but we do not wish to do any thing to offend our great father.

Many of your children are here to-day, to listen to your counsels. Their brethren, whom they have left in their own country, will remain at peace. But our friends here, who also listen to you, I fear some of their young men may be doing mischief at home.

We live at a great distance. When we are struck upon, it is long before you hear it. Before our story reaches you, you hear another, which makes you think we have been to blame; but these people here have always been the aggressors.

I am ready to make any arrangement to keep quiet; but they first take the war-club, and strike us. I can't depend upon their word, unless their hands are tied by their great father.

It is useless to give us much counsel. Our agent, who has been with us a long time, has always given us good advice, and kept us at peace. I hope you will make these people remain quiet. We never strike, unless they strike first. Fourteen times (throwing fourteen sticks upon the table) have they struck us — myself and the Sissetons of the plains.

When Standing Cloud had taken his seat, Mampuweechastah, or "White Man", arose.

My Father: What you say, and what our great father says, I always hear with open ears. When I

received the invitation from our agent, I determined, when I came, to keep my ears open. What I say is all true. Once I acted a little foolishly, but no lives were lost then. My ears are always open to good counsel; but I think my great father should take a stick and bore the ears of these people. They appear to shut their ears when they come here.

I always thought myself and my people would be made happy by listening to your advice. But I begin to think the more we listen, the more we are imposed upon by other tribes. Had I been foolish, and given foolish counsel to my young men, you would not have seen me here to-day; I might have been home doing mischief, seeking the revenge these people have provoked. I have been struck by these men eight times, and have lost many of my people. But I have advised my young men to remain quiet, and let our great father know the whole truth. I am always ready to do the best I can for my people; but it seems to me, the more we listen to the counsels of our great father, the more we are imposed upon by the tribes around us. I hope you will make them keep quiet.

Grown men, like these, ought to be men of sense, but I do not believe they have any sense. I cannot place any confidence in them. I have more confidence in that little child, (pointing to the son of Keokuk, who sat between his father's feet) than in all these large, grown men.

After a pause of some moments, Keokuk, or the

"Watchful Fox," the principal chief of the confederated tribes of Sac and Fox Indians, arose, accompanied by Wapello, "The Prince", principal chief of the Fox Indians, and Appanoose, or "He who was a chief when a child", and also Poweshiek, or "Shedding Bear", one of the principal chiefs of the Fox Indians, went forward to the table, and shook hands with the commissioner. At the same moment, his chiefs and braves rose, and continued standing all the while Keokuk was speaking.

My Father: I have heard the few remarks you have made to your children. You have heard the words of those sitting around you, and you now know the way in which the hearts of the Sioux are placed. You will now hear how my heart, and the hearts of my chiefs and braves, standing around me, are placed.

I should like to know who can make these people who have brought that bunch of sticks, speak so as to be believed. If I were to count up every thing that has taken place, on their part, it would take several days to cut sticks.

You see me, probably, for the first time. I once thought I could, myself alone, make a treaty of peace with these people. Since the first time that I have met my white brethren in council, I have been told the red skins must shake hands. This has always been the word. After I returned home from the treaty of Prairie du Chien, I visited these people in their lodges, and smoked their pipe; within two

days they killed one of my principal braves. They say they have a good heart. I gave them a blue flag — one they professed to estimate highly. The same fall they killed one of my chief men.

My heart is good; these people do not tell the truth when they say their hearts are good. The summer before last you wished to send one of your officers into the Sioux country. I sent two of my young chiefs, who are here, with him and your troops, as we thought it was to make peace. They brought back this pipe (holding up one); do you know it? We received it as a pipe of peace from the Sioux. Yet the same fall they killed my people on our land. I do not think they are good men; for while my chiefs went with your troops, they killed my people on our own hunting grounds.

These people say we are deaf to your advice, and advise you to bore our ears with sticks. I think their ears are so closed against the hearing of all good, that it will be necessary to bore them with iron. (Here he brandished his spear fiercely in the face of the scowling Sioux). They will not listen to you; nor can you make them.

I have told you that it would be useless to count up all their aggressions; that it would take several days to cut sticks. They boast of having kept quiet because you told them not to strike. Since the treaty was made they have come upon our lands and killed our men. We did not strike back because we had given a pledge not to go on to their land.

Our difficulty with these people commenced with the drawing of the line in 1825. Before that, we kept the Sioux beyond St. Peter's River. We freely hunted on the great prairie and saw nothing of them. Now they cross the line, and kill us in our own country. If, among the whites, a man purchased a piece of land and another came upon it, you would drive him off. Let the Sioux keep from our lands, and there will be peace.

I now address that old man, (pointing to a Sioux who had spoken). I think he does not know what his young men are now doing at home as well as he thinks he does. I will not say any thing I do not know to be true. I make no promises. If he knows his young men are, at this moment, quiet at home, he knows more than I do about mine, and must have greater powers of knowledge than I have.

I have no more to say at present. The Great Spirit has heard me, and he knows I have spoken truth. If it be not true, it is the first time that I ever told a falsehood.

Wapello, "The Prince", principal Fox chief, spoke for his tribe.

My Father: You have heard our chief speak. In him consists the strength of our nation. He is our arms, our heart, our soul.

When these men (the Sioux) made their charges against us, they must have thought you did not know them as well as I do. What our chief (Keokuk) has said, I know to be true. I have always been with

him, and I have ever been called a chief by those who knew me. This is all I have to say.

Poweshiek, or "Shedding Bear", another Fox chief, addressed the Sioux.

You have heard our chief. (Here he was told he must speak to the commissioner.)

We have all listened to you, (the commissioner). We have never been the aggressors, though they (the Sioux) say we have. When I killed a Sioux, I revenged myself on my own land, not on theirs. These men are like I was when a little boy; there is a great deal of mischief in their heads.

Just before I left home we had a skirmish with these people. There was a dispute as to the place where it occurred. We sent men to see and examine the ground. To listen to them, (the Sioux) it would be supposed we always went on their land to fight; but this man (pointing to Mr. Burtis, one of them sent), and others went to the battle ground. From them you may learn where it was.

Appanoose, or "He who was a chief when a child", a Sac, spoke last.

My Father: You have heard what my chief has said. These men say they listen attentively to you, and keep all your advice. But we know how they have listened, and how they have acted.

All our difficulties have arisen with them since the line was drawn by the treaty of 1825 between them and us. Since then we have sold some land ad-

joining the line, by the treaty of 1830. I think they can't know where the line is; we have been afraid to act as we did when the great prairie was our only boundary. After this line was run, we remained on our side of it. They pressed nearer and came on our lands; we bore it, and they thought we were afraid. We could not stand this always, and we cleared them off our land. I suppose every time we drove them off our land they cut a stick; that will account for that bundle of sticks on the table.

But they must not think we are afraid of them.

We have not struck them since the drawing of the line, except when they came upon our lands. This we can prove. None of our people have crossed the line to hunt or fish. These men do not know the line; we do. If it was marked with stone-coal, they might see the dark line, and keep out of our country.

The commissioner answered the Indians:

I have heard the talk of the chiefs and braves of the Sioux and Sacs and Foxes. I did not assemble them to judge which had attacked the other first, or to determine which was in the wrong. I assembled them to exhort them to keep peace on their return to their own homes, to bury the tomahawk, and attend only to the cultivation of the earth and the hunting of game.

Their great father purchased the land of which they have spoken, to be a neutral ground to keep your tribes apart, and on which neither of you should encroach. This strip of land is forty miles

wide, sufficient to keep you apart. This space can not be passed by either tribe without doing wrong to the other, and displeasing your great father. Whichever of you do cross it, must be considered the aggressor.

I exhort you again, on returning home, to throw away the war-club and bury the tomahawk, and trust that I shall hear that the two great tribes now represented before me have smoked the pipe together, and promised to remain at peace.

The Sacs and Fox Indians were then requested to leave the council, when the commissioner addressed the Sioux Indians, after presenting a medal to each of them, as follows:

You have now received, each of you, a medal of your great father. Whenever you look upon it, you must remember that his eye is upon you; and if you do wrong, he will know it. He expects you to remain at peace in your own country, and not to enter the hunting grounds of the Sacs and Foxes. He wishes that you may cultivate the earth and acquire the arts of the white men, and prosper. I will take leave of you now, wishing you a prosperous and pleasant journey, and that you may find your wives and children, and friends in good health.

The treaty we have made with you shall be fulfilled in good faith. You shall have the kind of money you like, and every thing shall be done for you in a spirit of liberal kindness.

Comment by the Editor

THE SACS AND THE FOXES

Although not native to the prairies west of the Mississippi, the Sacs and the Foxes figured more prominently in the history of Iowa than any other Indians. Having invaded this region shortly after their confederation in the first part of the eighteenth century, they remained the dominant red men of Iowa for more than a century. As possessors of the land, they were the tribes with whom the early settlers came in contact. It was principally they who ceded most of the Iowa country to the government.

While the Sacs and Foxes have almost invariably been treated as a single people by the government and in literature, they were in fact separate tribes. Even after their alliance they did not always act in unison either in peace or war. Though drawn together by their common Algonkian culture and in time still more intimately by intermarriage, the Sacs and the Foxes nevertheless maintained their tribal integrity and lived in separate villages. They differed widely in personal characteristics and frequently in public policy. As a rule the Foxes were individualists, whereas the Sacs were more socially minded. United for military purposes, they did not always go on the war-path together.

Both the Sacs and the Foxes were splendid warriors. Perhaps that accounts, in a measure, for their dominant rôle in the history of Iowa. Brave, resolute, and defiant they were. They put on the war-paint as joyously as they hunted the deer and the elk on the prairie. What they wanted they took, and they were willing to fight for their rights. Usually at peace with their Algonkian neighbors, whose language they understood, they were perpetually at war with the Sioux, who spoke an alien tongue. In their relations with white men, they were not particularly hostile and generally respected their treaty agreements. There is significance in the fact that the Spirit Lake massacre was a Siouan outrage.

J. E. B.

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